

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5597
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

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E. O. 11562: N/A
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SUBJ: VISIT OF PRESIDENT MOBUTU

REF: A. STATE 136208, B. LUBUMBASHI 616 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY. MOROCCAN RECEPTION OF ZAIRIAN PRESIDENT
MOBUTU DURING HIS MAY 19-20 VISIT WAS DISTINCTLY
MEASURED. EVIDENCE SUGGESTS THAT THE DISCUSSIONS WITH
THE KING WERE NOT EASY AND THAT MOROCCO PUT CONDITIONS
ON ANY MILITARY AID IT MAY OFFER -- INTERNAL REFORMS
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IN ZAIRE AND MULTI-NATIONAL AFRICAN PARTICIPATION IN
ANY MILITARY ASSISTANCE. END SUMMARY.

2. MEETING WITH HASSAN. MOBUTU MET WITH KING HASSAN ON
MAY 19; HOWEVER IT IS CLEAR FROM MOBUTU'S PRE-DEPARTURE
PRESS INTERVIEW AND MOROCCAN MEDIA COVERAGE THAT THE
ATMOSPHERE WAS SOMEWHAT COOL. IN HIS INTERVIEW WITH

OFFICIAL NEWS AGENCY MAP, MOBUTU MADE ONLY GENERAL REFERENCE TO THE LONG-STANDING FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE CHANCES OF MOROCCAN MILITARY AID IN THE NEAR FUTURE, HE RESPONDED "I BELIEVE THAT YOU KNOW THE PERSONAL POSITION OF HASSAN II AND ALSO THE POSITION OF HIS GOVERNMENT . . . THEY PREFER THAT THIS BE AN AFFAIR OF ALL COUNTRIES DEDICATED TO PEACE AND JUSTICE, NOT ONLY OF MOROCCO . . ." PARIS DOMESTIC SERVICE QUOTES SOURCES IN KING HASSAN'S ENTOURAGE AS STATING THAT MOBUTU WAS ASKED TO EMBARK ON SOME INTERNAL REFORMS, IF HE WANTED AID FROM MOROCCO AND OTHER COUNTRIES, WHILE LE MATIN DE PARIS QUOTED A SOURCE CLOSE TO THE KING AS SAYING "TODAY THE PROBLEM IS MOBUTU HIMSELF. HE MUST REVISE ZAIRE'S INTERNAL POLITICS." THESE THEMES ARE ECHOED IN OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH MOROCCANS HERE.

3. PRESS COVERAGE. MOROCCAN COMMENTARY ALSO REFLECTED THIS VIEW. DESPITE CRITICISM OF THE SHABA INVASION AND PRAISE FOR COMMON GOALS OF ZAIRE AND MOROCCO, THE SEMI-OFFICIAL PRESS AVOIDED ANY PRAISE OF MOBUTU HIMSELF, IN STARK CONTRAST TO COVERAGE DURING HIS LAST VISIT HERE IN MID-1977 THE OPPOSITION COMMUNIST (PPS) AND SOCIALIST (USFP) PRESS, WHICH CRITICIZED MOBUTU FOR HIS DOMESTIC PRACTICES WHEN THE FIRST REPORTS OF SHABA II ARRIVED, WERE PRACTICALLY SILENT ON THE VISIT, AS WAS THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRESS OF THE ISTIQLAL PARTY, HEADED BY FOREIGN MINISTER BOUCETTA. THE SEMI-OFFICIAL AL-MAGHRIB AND LE MATIN AS WELL AS ISTIQLAL'S L'OPINION FRONT-PAGED EXCERPTS FROM KING HASSAN'S WASHINGTON POST INTERVIEW, HEADLINING MOROCCO'S WILLINGNESS TO SEND TROOPS ONLY IF OTHER COUNTRIES DID THE SAME (SEE REF A).

4. MOROCCAN MILITARY PRESENCE IN ZAIRE. KING HASSAN STATED IN WASHINGTON POST INTERVIEW THAT THE GOM HAS SENT ONLY 30 MEN TO ZAIRE FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE MOROCCAN EMBASSY IN KINSHASA. HOWEVER, AFP AND THE ZAIRIAN NEWS AGENCY, AZAP, REPORT THAT TWO MOROCCAN MILITARY MISSION HAVE BEEN IN ZAIRE FOR THE LAST TEN DAYS -- "30 TECHNICIANS" TO MAINTAIN THE MILITARY MATERIAL GIVEN TO ZAIRE AFTER THE 1977 SHABA INVASION AND "50 PERSONS" TO FOLLOW "MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS" IN SHABA. ON MAY 30, SEMI-OFFICIAL AL-MAGHRIB REPORTED THAT MOROCCO HAD SENT 50 TECHNICIANS TO KOLWEZI TO STUDY NEEDS AND DEVISE AN EVENTUAL FORM OF ACTION. (EMBASSY NOTES REF B REPORTING ARRIVAL OF 30 GOM "TROOPS" IN LUBUMBASHI ON MAY 30.)

5. COMMENT: EMBASSY HAS NO RELIABLE INFORMATION ON THE ACTUAL NUMBER OF MOROCCANS IN ZAIRE, BUT WE BELIEVE IT IS SMALL. DESPITE TOTAL MOROCCAN AGREEMENT ON THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF ZAIRE, MOBUTO HIMSELF IS GENERALLY VIEWED WITH RESERVE IN RABAT. THE CAUTIOUS PUBLIC GOM APPROACH TO AIDING ZAIRE MILITARILY REFLECTS A GENUINE CONCERN THAT IT NOT BE THE ONLY AFRICAN STATE TO INTERVENE THIS TIME. IN THIS LIGHT, ANY EARLY GOM MOVE TO COMMIT SIGNIFICANT FORCES WOULD SEEM UNLIKELY. TWO KEY MEETINGS IN COMING DAYS WILL TAKE PLACE, ONE IN PARIS ON JUNE 5 BETWEEN KEY WESTERN NATIONS AND THE OTHER AT THE BEGINNING OF NEXT WEEK IN NIAMEY, BETWEEN AFRICAN AND ARAB MINISTERS. GOM FONMIN BOUCETTA WILL ATTEND THE LATTER AND CAN BE EXPECTED TO PURSUE HIS CONSULTATIONS WITH HIS COLLEAGUES ON ZAIRE.

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